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IV.—STUDIES IN THE VEDA.

1. The instrumental with verbs of ruling: AV 4. 27. 4, 5.

This construction seems certainly to have existed in Indo-European. (See Delbrück, *Grundriss* III¹: p. 248 f. Later, but less complete than Delbrück, and almost wholly dependent on him, are the remarks of Brugmann, *Grundriss* II²: 2, p. 534.)

It is regular with most verbs of ruling in the Slavic languages. Delbrück gives sufficient examples for OBulg. and Servian. I may add—since Delbrück does not mention it—that to this day it is the only possible construction with the verb *vlad'et'* "to rule" and its synonyms in Modern Russian. There are some, though not many, clear cases of it in Old English, and perhaps in other Teutonic languages; these Delbrück duly records. The Greek language cannot be regarded as offering safe evidence, because of lack of certainty that the dative after verbs of ruling represents an older instrumental. The Latin *potior*, however, seems a clear case, since there is no reason to doubt that the ablative found after this verb represents an instrumental—especially in view of the striking parallel with the Vedic *patyate*, the etymological equivalent of *potior*, which also takes the instrumental.

Thus far the only example of this construction from Vedic that has been recorded is the denominative verb *patyate* "lord it over, rule", to which reference has just been made. The construction is duly recorded already in the Petersburg lexicon s. v., and is noticed by Delbrück in his *Altindische Syntax*, p. 133, where he adds (what may be inferred from examining the passages quoted in the *Pet. lex.*) that the verb more frequently takes the accusative. His explanation of the psychology of the construction ("eigentlich Herr sein vermitteln") applies to the Indo-European rather than exclusively to the Vedic usage, and seems likely to be correct. The example quoted by Delbrück is one already found in the

Petersburg lexicon, viz. RV 3. 54. 15: *indro víçvāir vīryāiḥ pátyamānaḥ*, "Indra der über alle Heldenkräfte verfügt". This translation of Delbrück's undoubtedly reproduces the original better than those of some other commentators, e. g. Grassmann, who, in order to make it fit more familiar uses of the instrumental, tortures the meaning of the verb ("mächtig oder reich sein an"). The Petersburg lexicon does not translate the passage, but by its general definition of the word appears to agree with Delbrück rather than with Grassmann. Geldner (Glossar, s. v.) agrees with Delbrück; Ludwig does not quite get the point right ("Indra der herrscht durch besitz aller heldenkraft").

Evidently, however, the case would be stronger if there were found some passage in the Veda in which another verb of ruling is thus construed with the instrumental. This has up to the present time never been done. I hope to show in this paper that the verb *īç* (*īṣṭe*) is so used in AV 4. 27. 4 and 5. If true, this will not only confirm Delbrück's interpretation of *patyate*, but form an addition to Vedic lexicography, and furnish the correct interpretation of an AV passage which has never been rightly understood.

The definitions given in the Petersburg lexicon for the root *īç* may be summarized as follows: 1) zu eigen haben, Eigentümer sein; mit gen.—zu eigen sein, gehören. 2) verfügen über; vermögen, mächtig sein; Herr sein einer Sache; (mit gen.) 3) gebieten über, herrschen; mit gen.—mit acc. (post-ved.)

No essential part of this definition is changed in later lexicons; in particular, no intimation is ever found that *īç* may take the instrumental.

Consider now the AV passage in question.

AV 4. 27. 4: *apāḥ samudrād divam ūd vahanti*
divás pṛthivīm abhī yé sṛjānti
yé adbhīr īçānā marútaç cáranti
té no muñcantv áñhasaḥ.

AV 4. 27. 5: *yé kīlālena tarpáyanti yé ghr̥téna*
yé vā váyo médasā saṃsṛjānti
yé adbhīr īçānā marúto varṣáyanti
té no muñcantv áñhasaḥ.

Verse 4: "They draw up the waters from the ocean to the sky—and who pour it down from the sky upon the earth; the Maruts who move *ruling over the waters*—may they deliver us from evil".

Verse 5: "Who give delight with nectar, with ghee—who unite strength with fatness (in, *i. e.* for, their favorites); the Maruts who, *ruling over the waters*, cause rain to fall—may they deliver us from evil".

The arguments for the proposed interpretation of *adbhīr īcānāḥ* hardly need to be presented after all that has been said. Remembering the Vedic use of *patyate* with the instrumental; the clear, if somewhat sporadic, traces of the use of the same case after such verbs in many of the I-E. languages; and particularly its standard and perfectly regular use¹ in the Slavic languages, the only other branch of the I-E. languages which has preserved the instrumental in full force—we can hardly avoid recognizing that we have in this expression a lingering trace of what must have been in prehistoric times a much commoner construction. Note that even with *patyate* the usage is moribund in the Veda.

I think it will strengthen our position to observe the attempts of earlier investigators to interpret these AV words in other ways. Whitney says "the Maruts who go about lording it with the waters": and in the next verse, "the Maruts who, lording it with the waters, cause to rain". This translation, if it may be called one (it is hardly more than a mosaic of words), either means nothing at all, or it is a half-hearted step in the direction of our interpretation. Griffith says "the Maruts who move mighty with their waters" and "who rain mighty with their waters"—making the instr. purely associative, it would seem, though the second phrase is slightly ambiguous. Weber says "durch die Wasser, herrschend, wandeln die Maruts", and similarly the other verse, "Welche Marut, durch die Wasser, herrschend, Regen bringen". The punctuation seems to imply that Weber meant to separate *adbhīr* entirely from *īcānāḥ*, and make it an instrumental of means with the following verb: but how is this possible with *cāranti*?

¹To use any other case than the instrumental after the Russian *vlad'et'* "to rule" would be as bad an error as to say "ich danke Dich" in German.

All these translations (which appear to be the only interpretations of the hymn thus far published) show by their mutual divergence, as well as their common awkwardness and lack of clarity, that the verse has needed further light. I trust the present note has removed one more passage from the still formidable, though ever decreasing, limbo of Vedic *cruces* by showing that *adbhír iṣānāḥ* means *tout simplement* "ruling the waters".

2. AV 4. 5. 7 = RVKh. 7. 55. 1.

*svāpna svapnābhikāraṇena sārvaṁ nī śvāpayā jānam
otsūryām anyānt svāpāyāvyuṣām jāgṛtād ahām indra
ivāriṣṭo ākṣitaḥ.*

The verse is found at the end of the famous sleep-charm, AV 4. 5, most of whose verses are also found in RV 7. 55. This verse is not found in that text, but is added as an appendix to it, among the *khilāni*; see Scheftelowitz, *Die Apokryphen des Rigveda*, p. 86. Scheftelowitz reads the verse thus:

*svāpnas svapnādhikāraṇe sārvaṁ nī śvāpayā jānam
ā sūryam anyān svāpāyāvyuṣām *jāgṛyām ahām*

Pada e is lacking.

We are concerned here only with the first two padas of the verse, or more narrowly still, with the noun *svāpna* or *svāpnas* and the verb *nī-śvāpayā*. The form *svāpna* has always been interpreted as vocative, and the AV line has been rendered substantially as follows: "O sleep, with the incantation of sleep put to sleep all the people".

But there are grave doubts as to whether the AV reading is really a vocative. In the first place, several of Shankar P. Pandit's manuscripts of AV read at this place *svāpnas*—a nominative; and this appears to be the reading of all authorities in the equivalent verse of RVKh. In the second place, even if *svāpna* be the true AV reading here, it is by no means certain that it is meant for a vocative; it may perfectly well be a nominative (for *svāpnas* before sibilant plus consonant). Although the rule in most Vedic texts requires the dropping of final *s* only before initial *s* plus a *surd* consonant, this rule is by no means strictly followed out. See Whitney's note to AVPrātiç. 2. 86 on the impossibility of formulating definite

rules in this particular. Professor Bloomfield's and my Corpus of Vedic Variants, based on his Vedic Concordance, will contain some interesting data on this point, showing that in most Vedic texts there are at least sporadic instances of the dropping of a final *s* before a sibilant plus sonant.

In view of these two facts—viz. the likelihood that the original AV text read *svápnas*, and the possibility of interpreting even the form as it stands in our editions as a nominative—it seems in the highest degree probable that the AV understood this form as a nominative, in agreement with RVKh.

But what is the construction of this nominative? It is so awkward to construe it with the second person imperative *níṣvāpayā*—"being sleep, do thou put to sleep the people" !—that it is difficult for me to believe that this is the original reading of this verse,—in view of the fact that there seems to me to be a very easy escape from the difficulty.

I propose for *ṣvāpayā-jānam*, *ṣvāpayāj-jānam*. This is so slight an emendation—*jj* for simple *j* after a long vowel—that it needs little defense. In the period of oral tradition it is probable that the two readings would have been hardly, if at all, distinguishable. For after a long vowel it is highly improbable that any marked distinction could have been made between the pronunciation of a double *j* and that of a single *j*.

We should then have a simple and consistent reading: "Let sleep . . . put to sleep all the people".

Whether the emendation be considered necessary or possible or not, I regard it as certain that the form *svápnas*(*s*) is to be interpreted as a nominative, and that all previous interpretations of this verse in the AV are to be corrected accordingly.

3. *Aṣaskambhá*, AV 4. 6. 4.

This verse occurs in a hymn against poison, especially against the poison of poisoned arrows. Except for this one word, there would be no difficulty about the verse. It reads:

*yás ta ásyat páñcāṅgurir vakrāc cid ádhi dhánvanah
aṣaskambháśya śalyān nīr avocam ahám viśám.*

"What five-fingered one hurled at thee from some curved bow—from the dart of the *aṣaskambhá* I have exorcized the poison".

The Pāippalāda version (folio 78a) is very corrupt in spots; the word *apaskambhāsya*, however, is correctly preserved in it, and for *çalyān* it has the important variant *bāhvor*—"from the arm of the *apaskambhá* I have exorcized the poison".

The word *apaskambhá* has been the despair of all commentators. Whitney does not render it in his translation; in his note he thinks of trying to make it a part of the body—being influenced by the Ppp. *bāhvor* for *çalyāt*; he thinks, e. g. of *apa skandhasya bāhvor*, 'from shoulder and arms', i. e., from wounds in them. This emendation would be more attractive if the word were ablative instead of genitive.

Bloomfield renders the word "the tearing (arrow)", but says in his note that this rendering is "mere conjecture": it is "based upon the supposition that *apa-skambh* may mean 'uproot', or the like, as the opposite of *skambh*". The Petersburg lexicon says "Befestigung (vielleicht der Pfeilspitze an den Schaft)". Zimmer, AIL., p. 300, says "die Verbindung (des Pfeilschaftes an die Spitze heisst) *apaskamba* (sic!) *çalyasya* 'Befestigung des Schaftes'", evidently meaning to follow the Pet. lex., but carelessly misspelling the word, and changing the ablative *çalyāt* of the text into a genitive, thus exactly reversing the real construction of the words. Weber says 'Widerhaken', and in his note merely refers to the Pet. lex. (apparently regarding his rendering as an equivalent of BR's?). Ludwig likewise says 'widerhaken', without comment or explanation; Whitney rightly describes this as a mere guess. Griffith, likewise, says "the fastening band"—making the word, however, depend on *viṣām*, not on *çalyān*. Cuny, in *Mélanges Sylvain Lévi*, p. 79, adheres to the Pet. lex. interpretation.

It will be evident from this (I believe) complete array of all previous attempts to explain the word that no commentator has heretofore arrived at an understanding of it which was quite satisfactory, even to himself.

In approaching our interpretation of the verse, let me first call attention to a stylistic fact whose importance for the interpretation of this verse seems not to have been realized. The first line of the verse is a relative clause—"what five-fingered one hurled at thee from some curved bow"—By all the laws of Vedic verse construction we should expect to find

the "antecedent" of the relative—that is, the noun to which it refers—expressed, or at least *very* clearly understood, in the second half of the verse. I admit there are cases in the Veda where this is not the case—where there is a distinct break or anacolouthon between the two halves of such a verse, the relative being left unexplained. But those are not the type: they are distinctly bad verses. I am sure all Vedists will agree that an interpretation of this verse which finds in the second half-verse the noun to which *yás* refers will be much stronger than one which fails to do so.

Now neither *çalyān*, 'dart', nor *viṣām*, 'poison', will satisfy this requirement, because of the sense; *yás* is the subject of *āsyat*, 'hurled', and the adjective *pāñcāṅgurir*, 'five-fingered', agrees with it. It must, therefore, refer to some person or thing which can be spoken of as five-fingered, and as hurling something. It is difficult to see how the words 'dart' or 'poison' could fulfil this double requirement.

If, then, the canons of Vedic verse construction have not been violated here, we ought to find that *apaskambhá*, the only remaining noun in the second half-verse, is the word to which *yás* refers, and consequently the logical subject of *āsyat*. Concretely speaking, the verse would then mean: 'what five-fingered *apaskambhá* hurled at thee', etc., 'from his (or its) dart', etc.

The adjective *pāñcāṅgurir* gives us a further tip. It can obviously mean nothing but 'five-fingered', and it is therefore scarcely possible that it refers to anything except the hand or arm of a person, or (by extension therefrom) to the person himself. Consequently, if *apaskambhá* refers to the same thing that *pāñcāṅguri* does, it must likewise refer to a hand or arm, or the owner thereof. It is certainly difficult to see how it could refer to any part of an arrow—as all previous interpreters except Whitney have taken it.

The word *apaskambhá* is not found except in this passage, but its etymology seems clear. It must come from the root *skabh* or *skambh* with *apa*. This root occurs, both in verbal forms and in nominal derivatives, not infrequently in the Veda. By the side of it, frequently confused with it, and always indistinguishable in meaning, occurs a root *stabh* or *stambh*. The parallelism between these two roots is most

striking, and is so familiar to Vedists that it needs no illustration. It extends also to some derivatives of the two roots (*stambha* and *skambha* for instance).

The Petersburg lexicon recognizes the identity of meaning between these two roots, and further observes (s. v. *skabh*, end) the interesting fact that the root *skambh* gradually loses ground to its rival, and in the later language comes to be almost unknown. The same is true of its derivatives; *stambha*, first recorded in KS., becomes very common later, while *skambha*, which is a not infrequent word in RV, is scarcely found after the AV.

The two roots *stambh* and *skambh* are, in fact, so inextricably confused in the consciousness of the language that no clear or general division in meanings can be made between them. They both mean 1) to support, and 2) to obstruct, impede. These two shades of meaning are carried out (of course with many finesses in detail) in numerous derivatives of *stambh*; the root *skambh* has fewer derivatives, and being, as we have seen, practically restricted to the earliest period of the language, it has less chance to develop. But that it has both these meanings in a clearly marked way may be seen from BR. We quote here merely one example of the meaning which interests us most in this paper: RV 10. 76. 4 *skabhāyāta nirṛtim*, 'Put a check to Destruction!' (addressed to the pressing-stones).

Now no verbal compound *apa-stabh* or *-skabh* occurs; and except for this one word, no noun is found containing *apa* and *skabh*. Neither are there any derivatives from *stabh* with *apa*, except one or two dubious nouns which are more in need of explanation themselves than likely to help explain other words (*apastambha* or *°ba*, an alleged organ in the chest, and *apastambhinī*, name of a plant). We shall therefore be compelled to seek help from the uncompounded roots and their derivatives.

All commentators on this stanza thus far have made the concept of 'support' their starting-point. It seems to me, on the contrary, extremely clear that we have to start from the other basic meaning of *skambh*—'obstruct' or 'impede'.

Namely: the root *stabh*, particularly, in various of its forms and derivatives, is distinctly associated with obstruction by

magical or uncanny means. More especially, it appears to refer to the laming or paralysis of members of the body—by any means, but especially by magical or uncanny ones. Thus the past participle *stabdha*, according to the Petersburg lexicon, nearly always means ‘steif, starr, gelähmt, unbeweglich’. The causative *stabhāyāti* shows distinct relations to magic in RV. 6. 44. 22 (misprinted 6. 44. 2 in BR.):

*ayām devāḥ sāhasā jāyamāna indreṇa yujā paṇim
astabhāyat
ayām svāsya pitúr āyudhānīndur amuṣṇād ācivasya
māyāḥ.*

“This god (Soma), brought forth by might, together with Indra held fast (by magic) the Paṇi: he stole his own father’s (Indra’s) weapons, and the magic arts (*māyā*) of the Evil One.” The occurrence of *māyāḥ* in the context makes it clear that magic obstruction is connoted by the root *stabh* here. The classical causative *stambhayati*, according to BR, only rarely means ‘support’: it is defined as occasionally meaning ‘steif-, unbeweglich machen, lähmen’, but most frequently of all ‘anhalten, hemmen, festbannen (durch Zauber)’. The noun *stambha* likewise, besides its common meaning ‘pillar, column’ (derived from the idea of ‘support’), is frequently used in senses closely related to those just mentioned. See BR, definitions 3 (Erstarrung . . . des Körpers, Lähmung), and 4 (Hemmung, Bannung durch Zaubermittel)—both fairly common.

This noun *stambha* is, indeed, not found in any work as early as the AV: but that precisely this sort of ‘obstruction’—namely, paralyzing of the limbs by magic or uncanny means—was one of the meanings of the root in the earliest times is shown by a number of RV examples. One of the best was quoted above (6. 44. 22). Another is found in 2. 11. 5: *apó dyām tastabhvāṁsam āhann āhim çūra* . . . “O hero, thou smotest the dragon who had paralyzed—stopped by his black arts—the waters and the heaven”. Vṛtra is of course the dragon, and we know from numerous other passages that it is by black art (*māyā*) that he restrains the waters.

Now the root *skabh* is as we have seen much more limited

in scope than *stabh*, and in fact practically dies out at an early period of the language. The total number of recorded occurrences of it and its derivatives is limited: most of them show the other phase of the meaning of the root—the meaning ‘support’. That *skabh* might mean also ‘obstruct’ is nevertheless clear; cf. RV. 10. 76. 4, quoted above, and RV 1. 39. 2, where the infinitive *prati-skábhe* is used of the weapons of the Maruts—‘for blocking (hostile attacks)’. I have not, indeed, found any case where a derivative of *skabh* can with *certainty* be said to be used of magical obstruction, or of paralysis of the limbs. Both the passages just quoted *may* be so interpreted, but the context does not prove it. But the otherwise perfect parallelism between *skabh* and *stabh* makes it indubitable that this particular kind of ‘obstruction’ must have been at least a potential, even if possibly latent, phase of the meaning of *skabh*. In the plain and straightforward language of Boehtlingk and Roth, ‘*stabh*=*skabh*’, and a meaning which is so markedly developed in derivatives from *stabh*, and which is really only a specialized case of a meaning which is proved to have belonged likewise to *skabh*, surely cannot be denied to *skabh*. The two roots are semantically indistinguishable.

I believe, then, that *apaskambhá* is a noun of agent formed with the primary suffix *-a* (Whitney Grammar 1148c) from the root *skabh* or *skambh* compounded with *apa*.¹ The meaning of the word is ‘one who hinders or obstructs (in particular, it may be presumed, the motion of the limbs of another) by uncanny means’. I think as a handy translation that ‘paralyzer’ does fairly well. The uncanny means in the present instance is, of course, the poison. The *apaskambhá* may refer simply to the hand of the person who hurls the poisoned dart (cf. *pāñcāṅgurir*); but in view of the Ppp. reading *bāhvor* for *çalyān* perhaps it would be better to suppose that it means (by an easy transference) the person whose hand did the hurling.

¹ As to the use of the prefix little needs to be, or can be, said. The general use of *apa* fits the proposed meaning of the word well enough; but the entire lack of other compounds of *apa* with these roots (for the classical *apastambha* and *°bhini* are themselves problematic, and give no aid) leaves nothing to say about *apa* in this isolated word.

The verse then means: "The five-fingered (hand—of the paralyzer) which did hurl at thee from some curved bow—from the dart of (this) paralyzer I have exorcised the poison". Or, if we supposed that *apaskambhá* is applied directly to the hand itself, which is also possible: "The five-fingered (paralyzer, sc. the hand) which did hurl at thee", etc.

The Pāippalāda reading, which has *bāhvor* for *çalyān*, must understand *apaskambhá* of the person, not of the hand: "The five-fingered (hand) which did hurl at thee from some curved bow—from the arm of the paralyzer", etc. With this reading it is best to consider that *yás* in pada a refers to the hand or arm (*bāhu*), which the epithet *pāñcāṅgurir* (in Ppp. °*lir*) thus fits directly, without any transference.

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